

Preface to "Honour of the Imperial  
Army"

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"The honour of the Imperial Army comes entirely from its intrinsic nature and its mission, originating in the peculiar character of our body politic.

When we trace the operations of the Imperial Army since the time of its foundation, we find its characteristic sense of honour always unmistakably throbbing in its glorious achievements.

To begin with, the Imperial Army is the army of the Emperor, a moral existence to carry on the holy war for shielding the august Imperial virtue and propagating the Imperial Way. Such barbarism as to cause the dead to rise and flee, or such ferocity as to overawe the people, has never been the spirit of the Imperial Army.

The Imperial Army is rooted in the grand ideal on which our Empire was built, and acts in obedience to the Imperial Mandate granted by the Emperor MEIJI. In peace it is a central organization for elevating national spirit; in war it takes upon itself the duty of the vanguard of the force of Imperial Rule Assistance, as an Army of Benevolence and Righteousness. So, once it comes into action, it sweeps everything before it, displaying world-shaking might, but once action ceases, it is a stern example of virtue, a paragon, a moral stay, possessing such pride as to awe the masses into reverence.

This is the characteristic of the Imperial Army, and the reason why the Imperial Army is incomparably greater than the other armies of the world, both in name and reality.

Officers and men of the Imperial Army are always conscious of their noble mission and duty, desire nothing but excelling in the loyal service to His Majesty the Emperor, inherit still the spirit of the old song which sings, "Let me die by the side of the Emperor," go to death as joyfully as if going home, unite and fraternize disregarding rank, become fused in spirit, and always display such a bravery on the battlefield as to make even the gods weep. On the other hand, the Imperial Army is benevolent, chivalrous and humane, exhale virtue all round in an unobtrusive way, and is really worthy of the name of the Army of the Emperor.

This book attempts to tell the truth of activities of officers and men of the Imperial Army, and to show the real picture widely to the public.

Now, at this critical juncture at home and abroad, this book will give excellent suggestions, contributing to the awakening of the people in general, not to speak of the National Army. I shall be happy if this book can be, too, a bomb thrown amidst the present chaotic ideological and spiritual domain to shock it into sanity."

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HOMMA, Masaharu, Chief of the Press Section of the Army Ministry.